

~~TOP SECRET//SI//REL TO USA~~ ~~ORIGIN OF FORM~~

BETH S. BRINKMANN
Deputy Assistant Attorney General
DOUGLAS N. LETTER
Terrorism Litigation Counsel
JOSEPH H. HUNT
Director, Federal Programs Branch
VINCENT M. GARVEY
Deputy Branch Director
ANTHONY J. COPPOLINO
Special Litigation Counsel
MARCIA BERMAN
Senior Litigation Counsel
PAUL E. AHERN
Trial Attorney
U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Division, Federal Programs Branch
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
Phone: (202) 514-4782
Fax: (202) 616-8460

14 | Attorneys for the Government Defendants

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

19 IN RE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY) No. M:06-cv-01791-VRW
20 TELECOMMUNICATIONS RECORDS)
21 LITIGATION) CLASSIFIED DECLARATION
22 _____) OF LT. GEN. KEITH B.
23 This Document Relates Solely To:) ALEXANDER, DIRECTOR
24 Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al.) NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
25 (Case No. 07-cv-00693-VRW)) EX PARTE, IN CAMERA
26) Date: December 15, 2009
) Time: 10:00 a.m.
) Courtroom 6, 17th Floor
) Chief Judge Vaughn R. Walker

Derived From: NSA/CSSM 1-52
Dated: 20091030
Declassify On: 20341030

*Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)*

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR COMINT USE ONLY~~

1
2 (U) Table of Contents
3

- 4 I. (U) Introduction
5 II. (U) Summary
6 III. (U) Classification of Declaration
7 IV. (U) Background Information
8 A. (U) The National Security Agency
9 B. (U) September 11, 2001 and the al Qaeda Threat
10 C. (U) Summary of NSA Activities After 9/11 to Meet al Qaeda Threat
11 V. (U) Information Protected by Privilege
12 VI. (U) Description of Information Subject to Privilege and the Harm of Disclosure
13 A. (U) Information That May Tend to Confirm or Deny Whether the Plaintiffs Have
14 Been Subject to Any Alleged NSA Activities
15 B. (U) Information Related to NSA Activities, Sources, or Methods Implicated by
16 the Plaintiffs' Allegations and the Harm to National Security of Disclosure
17 1. (U) Plaintiffs' Allegations of a Communications Dragnet
18 (a) (U) Information Related to the Terrorist Surveillance Program
19 (b) (U) Other Classified Information Concerning NSA Activities
20 (c) (S//SI//NF) Technical Details of Analytic Capabilities
21 2. (FS//SI//OC/NF) Information Concerning Current FISA Authorized
22 Activities and Specific FISC Orders
23 3. (U) Plaintiffs' Allegations that Telecommunications Companies have
24 Assisted the NSA with the Alleged Activities
25 VII. (U) Risks of Allowing Litigation to Proceed
26 VIII. (U) Conclusion
27
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

2

1
CLASSIFIED DECLARATION OF LT. GEN. KEITH B. ALEXANDER
2
NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY3
(U) I, Lieutenant General Keith B. Alexander, do hereby state and declare as follows:4
I. (U) Introduction5
1. (U) I am the Director of the National Security Agency (NSA), an intelligence
6 agency within the Department of Defense. I am responsible for directing the NSA, overseeing the
7 operations undertaken to carry out its mission and, by specific charge of the President and the
8 Director of National Intelligence, protecting NSA activities and intelligence sources and methods.
9
10 I have been designated an original TOP SECRET classification authority under Executive Order
11 No. 12958, 60 Fed. Reg. 19825 (Apr. 17, 1995), as amended by Executive Order No. 13292, 68
12 Fed. Reg. 15315 (Mar. 25, 2003) (reprinted in 3 C.F.R. 2003 Comp. at 196 and at 50 U.S.C.A.
13 § 435 (Supp. 2009)), and Department of Defense Directive No. 5200.1-R, Information Security
14 Program Regulation, 32 C.F.R. § 159a.12 (2000).15
16 2. (U) The purpose of this declaration is to support an assertion of the military and
17 state secrets privilege (hereafter "state secrets privilege") by the Director of National Intelligence
18 (DNI) as the head of the intelligence community, as well as the DNI's assertion of a statutory
19 privilege under the National Security Act. Specifically, in the course of my official duties, I have
20 been advised of this litigation and the allegations in the plaintiffs' Amended Complaint. As
21 described herein, various classified facts related to the plaintiffs' claims are subject to the DNI's
22 state secrets privilege assertion. The disclosure of information discussed throughout this
23 declaration, which relates to NSA intelligence information, activities, sources, methods, and
24 relationships, reasonably could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national
25 security of the United States. In addition, it is my judgment that sensitive state secrets are so
26
27
28Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Verginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al (No 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No 06-1791)

3

1 central to the subject matter of the litigation that any attempt to proceed in the case risks the
2 disclosure of the secrets described herein and exceptionally grave damage to the national security
3 of the United States. Through this declaration, I also hereby invoke and assert the NSA's
4 statutory privilege set forth in section 6 of the National Security Agency Act of 1959, Public Law
5 No. 86-36 (codified as a note to 50 U.S.C. § 402) ("NSA Act"), to protect the information related
6 to NSA activities described below. The statements made herein are based on my personal
7 knowledge of NSA activities and operations, and on information available to me as Director of
8 the NSA.

10

II. (U) Summary

11 3. (U) I have reviewed the Amended Complaint in this case. Plaintiffs allege, in
12 sum, that, after the 9/11 attacks, the NSA received presidential authorization to engage in
13 surveillance activities far broader than the publicly acknowledged "Terrorist Surveillance
14 Program" ("TSP"), which was limited to the interception of specific international
15 communications involving persons reasonably believed to be associated with al Qaeda and
16 affiliated terrorist organizations. Plaintiffs allege that the NSA, with the assistance of
17 telecommunications companies, Amended Compl. ¶¶ 5-8, conducts a "dragnet" surveillance
18 program involving the interception of "virtually every telephone, internet and/or email
19 communication that has been sent from or received within the United States since 2001" as part
20 of an alleged Presidentially-authorized "program" after 9/11, *id.* ¶¶ 1, 4. I cannot disclose on the
21 public record the nature of any NSA information implicated by the plaintiffs' allegations.
22 However, as described further below, the disclosure of information related to the NSA's
23 activities, sources and methods implicated by the plaintiffs' allegations reasonably could be
24 expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security of the United States and,
25
26
27
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

4

1 for this reason, are encompassed by the DNI's state secrets and statutory privilege assertions, as
2 well as by my own statutory privilege assertion, and should be protected from disclosure in this
3 case. In addition, it is my judgment that sensitive state secrets are so central to the subject matter
4 of the litigation that any attempt to proceed in the case risks the disclosure of the classified
5 privileged national security information described herein and exceptionally grave damage to the
6 national security of the United States.

8 4. ~~PS//TSP//SI//OC/NF~~ The allegations in this lawsuit put at issue the disclosure
9 of information concerning several highly classified and critically important NSA intelligence
10 activities that commenced after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but which are now being conducted
11 pursuant to authority of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act ("FISA"), including ongoing
12 activities conducted under orders approved by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court
13 ("FISC"). Plaintiffs' allegation that the NSA undertakes indiscriminate surveillance of the
14 *content*¹ of millions of communications sent or received by people inside the United States –
15 under the now defunct-TSP or otherwise – is false, as discussed below. Likewise, the plaintiffs'
16 allegations that telecommunications companies assisted with the alleged dragnet program are
17 false, because the alleged dragnet does not exist. The NSA's collection of the content of
18 communications under the TSP was directed at international communications in which a
19 participant was reasonably believed to be associated with al Qaeda or an affiliated organization
20 and did not constitute the kind of dragnet collection of the content of millions of Americans'
21 telephone or Internet communications that the plaintiffs allege. Although the existence of the
22 TSP has been acknowledged, the details of that program remain highly classified, along with
23
24

25 _____
26 1 ~~PS//SI//OC/NF~~ The term "content" is used in this Declaration to refer to the substance,
27 meaning, or purport of a communication, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2510(8), as opposed to the
28 type of addressing or routing information referred throughout this declaration as "meta data."

1 details of related content surveillance activities undertaken after the TSP ended pursuant to
2 orders of the FISC. This information could not be disclosed to address or disprove or otherwise
3 litigate the plaintiffs' allegation of a content dragnet without causing exceptional harm to NSA's
4 sources and methods of gathering intelligence – including methods currently used to detect and
5 prevent further terrorist attacks under the authority of the FISA.
6

7 5. ~~(TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF)~~ In addition, as the Court is aware from prior classified
8 declarations submitted by the NSA in this and related proceedings, the NSA has collected,
9 pursuant to presidential authorization and currently under subsequent FISC orders, non-content
10 information (*i.e.*, meta data) about telephone and Internet communications in order to enable
11 highly sophisticated analytical tools that can uncover the contacts [REDACTED] of
12 members or agents of [REDACTED]. As noted above and
13 detailed below, the content surveillance subject to presidential authorization after 9/11 was not
14 the content dragnet surveillance that plaintiffs allege, and the collection of non-content
15 information, while significant in scope, remains a highly classified matter currently under FISA
16 authorization. For the NSA to attempt to explain, clarify, disprove, or otherwise litigate
17 plaintiffs' allegations regarding a communications dragnet would require the NSA to confirm the
18 existence of, or risk disclosure of facts concerning, intelligence sources and methods for the
19 collection of non-content information related to communications, as well as current NSA
20 operations under FISC Orders – disclosures that would cause exceptionally grave harm to
21 national security.
22
23

24
25
26 2. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ Certain FISC Orders are also directed at [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]. Because the allegations in the complaint reference activities
28 authorized after 9/11, which were directed at [REDACTED], any
further references to the FISC Orders will focus solely on activities under the orders directed at
[REDACTED].

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

6

1 6. ~~(TS//TSP//SI) #OECNF~~ The plaintiffs' allegation that
2 telecommunications carriers assisted the NSA in alleged intelligence activities also cannot be
3 confirmed or denied without risking exceptionally grave harm to national security. Because the
4 NSA has not undertaken the alleged dragnet collection of communications content, no carrier has
5 assisted in that alleged activity. ██████████
6 ██████████
7 ██████████
8 ██████████
9 ██████████
10 ██████████
11 ██████████ Disclosure of ██████████
12 ██████████
13 ██████████ would cause
14 exceptionally grave damage to the national security.

15 7. ~~(TS//TSP//SI) #OECNF~~ Accordingly, the DNI's state secrets and
16 statutory privilege assertions, and my own statutory privilege assertion, seek to protect against
17 the disclosure of the highly classified intelligence sources and methods put at issue in this case
18 and vital to the national security of the United States, including: (1) any information that would
19 tend to confirm or deny whether particular individuals, including the named plaintiffs, have been
20 subject to the alleged NSA intelligence activities; (2) information concerning NSA intelligence
21 sources and methods, including facts demonstrating that the content collection under the TSP
22 was limited to specific al Qaeda and associated terrorist-related international communications
23 and was not a content surveillance dragnet as plaintiffs allege; (3) facts that would tend to
24 confirm or deny the existence of the NSA's bulk meta data collection and use, and any
25 information about those activities; and (4) the fact that ██████████
26
27
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith R. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Simber, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

7

[REDACTED]. The fact that there has been public speculation
about alleged NSA activities does not diminish the need to protect intelligence sources and
methods from further exposure. Official confirmation and disclosure of the classified privileged
national security information described herein would cause exceptionally grave damage to the
national security. For these reasons, as set forth further below, I request that the Court uphold
the state secrets and statutory privilege assertions that the DNI and I now make, and protect the
information described in this declaration from disclosure.

III. (U) Classification of Declaration

8. (S//SI//NF) This declaration is classified TOP SECRET//TSP//SI [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]//ORCON/NOFORN pursuant to the standards in Executive Order No. 12958, as amended
by Executive Order No. 13292. Under Executive Order No. 12958, information is classified
“TOP SECRET” if unauthorized disclosure of the information reasonably could be expected to
cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security of the United States; “SECRET” if
unauthorized disclosure of the information reasonably could be expected to cause serious
damage to national security; and “CONFIDENTIAL” if unauthorized disclosure of the
information reasonably could be expected to cause identifiable damage to national security. At
the beginning of each paragraph of this declaration, the letter or letters in parentheses
designate(s) the degree of classification of the information the paragraph contains. When used
for this purpose, the letters “U,” “C,” “S,” and “TS” indicate respectively that the information is
either UNCLASSIFIED, or is classified CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET, or TOP SECRET³.

25
26 _____
27 3 (S//AF) [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

1 9. (S//SI//NF) Additionally, this declaration also contains Sensitive Compartmented
2 Information (SCI), which is "information that not only is classified for national security reasons
3 as Top Secret, Secret, or Confidential, but also is subject to special access and handling
4 requirements because it involves or derives from particularly sensitive intelligence sources and
5 methods." 28 C.F.R. § 17.18(a). Because of the exceptional sensitivity and vulnerability of such
6 information, these safeguards and access requirements exceed the access standards that are
7 normally required for information of the same classification level. Specifically, this declaration
8 references communications intelligence (COMINT), also referred to as special intelligence (SI),
9 which is a subcategory of SCI. COMINT or SI identifies SCI that was derived from exploiting
10 cryptographic systems or other protected sources by applying methods or techniques, or from
11 intercepted foreign communications.

14 10. (TS//TSP//SI [REDACTED] //OCANF) This declaration also contains information
15 related to or derived from the TSP, a prior controlled access signals intelligence program that
16 operated under presidential authorization in response to the attacks of September 11, 2001, until
17 January 2007. Although the TSP was publicly acknowledged by then-President Bush in
18 December 2005, details about the program remain highly classified and strictly compartmented.
19 Information pertaining to this program is denoted with the special marking "TSP" and requires
20 more restrictive handling. [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

9

1
2
3
4
5 11. (S//SI//NF) In addition to the fact that classified information contained herein may
6 not be revealed to any person without authorization pursuant to Executive Order 12958, as
7 amended, this declaration contains information that may not be released to foreign governments,
8 foreign nationals, or non-U.S. citizens without permission of the originator and in accordance
9 with DNI policy. This information is labeled "NOFORN" (NF). The "ORCON" (OR)
10 designator means that the originator of the information controls to whom it is released.
11
12

13 IV. (U) Background Information

14 A. (U) The National Security Agency

15 12. (U) The NSA was established by Presidential Directive in 1952 as a separately
16 organized agency within the Department of Defense. The NSA's foreign intelligence mission
17 includes the responsibility to collect, process, analyze, produce, and disseminate signals
18 intelligence (SIGINT) information, of which communications intelligence (COMINT) is a
19 significant subset, for (a) national foreign intelligence purposes, (b) counterintelligence purposes,
20 and (c) the support of military operations. See Executive Order 12333, § 1.7(c), 46 Fed. Reg.
21 59941 (Dec. 4, 1981), as amended.⁵
22
23

24
25 4 (S//SI//NF) [REDACTED]
26
27
28 5 (U) Section 1.7(c) of E.O. 12333, as amended, specifically authorizes the NSA to
"Collect (including through clandestine means), process, analyze, produce, and disseminate
Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

1 13. ~~(TS//SI//NF~~) Signals intelligence (SIGINT) consists of three subcategories:
2 (1) communications intelligence (COMINT); (2) electronic intelligence (ELINT); and (3) foreign
3 instrumentation signals intelligence (FISINT). Communications intelligence (COMINT) is
4 defined as "all procedures and methods used in the interception of communications and the
5 obtaining of information from such communications by other than the intended recipients." 18
6 U.S.C. § 798. COMINT includes information derived from the interception of foreign and
7 international communications, such as voice, facsimile, and computer-to-computer information
8 conveyed via a number of means [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]. Electronic intelligence (ELINT) is technical intelligence information derived from
10 foreign non-communications electromagnetic radiations except atomic detonation or radioactive
11 sources – in essence, radar systems affiliated with military weapons platforms (e.g., anti-ship)
12 and civilian systems (e.g., shipboard and air traffic control radars). Foreign instrumentation
13 signals intelligence (FISINT) is derived from non-U.S. aerospace surfaces and subsurface
14 systems which may have either military or civilian applications.

15 14. (U) The NSA's SIGINT responsibilities include establishing and operating an
16 effective unified organization to conduct SIGINT activities set forth in E.O. No. 12333,
17 § 1.12(b), as amended. In performing its SIGINT mission, NSA has developed a sophisticated
18 worldwide SIGINT collection network. The technological infrastructure that supports the NSA's
19 foreign intelligence information collection network has taken years to develop at a cost of
20 billions of dollars and untold human effort. It relies on sophisticated collection and processing
21 technology.

22
23
24
25
26
27
28 signals intelligence information for foreign intelligence and counterintelligence purposes to
 support national and departmental missions."

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

11

1 15. (U) There are two primary reasons for gathering and analyzing foreign
2 intelligence information. The first, and most important, is to gain information required to direct
3 U.S. resources as necessary to counter external threats and in support of military operations. The
4 second reason is to obtain information necessary to the formulation of U.S. foreign policy.
5 Foreign intelligence information provided by the NSA is thus relevant to a wide range of
6 important issues, including military order of battle; threat warnings and readiness; arms
7 proliferation; international terrorism; counter-intelligence; and foreign aspects of international
8 narcotics trafficking.

10 16. (U) Foreign intelligence produced by COMINT activities is an extremely
11 important part of the overall foreign intelligence information available to the United States and is
12 often unobtainable by other means. Public disclosure of either the capability to collect specific
13 communications or the substance of the information derived from such collection itself can
14 easily alert targets to the vulnerability of their communications. Disclosure of even a single
15 communication holds the potential of revealing intelligence collection techniques that are applied
16 against targets around the world. Once alerted, targets can frustrate COMINT collection by
17 using different or new encryption techniques, by disseminating disinformation, or by utilizing a
18 different communications link. Such evasion techniques may inhibit access to the target's
19 communications and therefore deny the United States access to information crucial to the
20 defense of the United States both at home and abroad. COMINT is provided special statutory
21 protection under 18 U.S.C. § 798, which makes it a crime to knowingly disclose to an
22 unauthorized person classified information "concerning the communication intelligence activities
23 of the United States or any foreign government."

27
28
Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

12

B. (U) September 11, 2001 and the al Qaeda Threat

1 17. (U) On September 11, 2001, the al Qaeda terrorist network launched a set of
2 coordinated attacks along the East Coast of the United States. Four commercial jetliners, each
3 carefully selected to be fully loaded with fuel for a transcontinental flight, were hijacked by al
4 Qaeda operatives. Those operatives targeted the Nation's financial center in New York with two
5 of the jetliners, which they deliberately flew into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center.
6 Al Qaeda targeted the headquarters of the Nation's Armed Forces, the Pentagon, with the third
7 jetliner. Al Qaeda operatives were apparently headed toward Washington, D.C. with the fourth
8 jetliner when passengers struggled with the hijackers and the plane crashed in Shanksville,
9 Pennsylvania. The intended target of this fourth jetliner was most evidently the White House or
10 the Capitol, strongly suggesting that al Qaeda's intended mission was to strike a decapitation
11 blow to the Government of the United States—to kill the President, the Vice President, or
12 Members of Congress. The attacks of September 11 resulted in approximately 3,000 deaths—
13 the highest single-day death toll from hostile foreign attacks in the Nation's history. In addition,
14 these attacks shut down air travel in the United States, disrupted the Nation's financial markets
15 and government operations, and caused billions of dollars of damage to the economy.

16 18. (U) On September 14, 2001, a national emergency was declared "by reason of the
17 terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center, New York, New York, and the Pentagon, and the
18 continuing and immediate threat of further attacks on the United States." Presidential
19 Proclamation No. 7463, 66 Fed. Reg. 48199 (Sept. 14, 2001). The United States also
20 immediately began plans for a military response directed at al Qaeda's training grounds and
21 havens in Afghanistan. On September 14, 2001, both Houses of Congress passed a Joint
22 Resolution authorizing the President of the United States "to use all necessary and appropriate
23
24
25
26
27
28

Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

13

1 force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized,
2 committed, or aided the terrorist attacks" of September 11. Authorization for Use of Military
3 Force, Pub. L. No. 107-40 § 21(a), 115 Stat. 224, 224 (Sept. 18, 2001). Congress also expressly
4 acknowledged that the attacks rendered it "necessary and appropriate" for the United States to
5 exercise its right "to protect United States citizens both at home and abroad," and acknowledged
6 in particular that "the President has authority under the Constitution to take action to deter and
7 prevent acts of international terrorism against the United States." *Id.* pmb1.

8
9 19. (U) Also after the 9/11 attacks, a Military Order was issued stating that the attacks
10 of September 11 "created a state of armed conflict," see Military Order by the President § 1(a).
11 66 Fed. Reg. 57833, 57833 (Nov. 13, 2001), and that al Qaeda terrorists "possess both the
12 capability and the intention to undertake further terrorist attacks against the United States that, if
13 not detected and prevented, will cause mass deaths, mass injuries, and massive destruction of
14 property, and may place at risk the continuity of the operations of the United States
15 Government," and concluding that "an extraordinary emergency exists for national defense
16 purposes," *id.* § 1(c), (g), 66 Fed. Reg. at 57833-34. Indeed, shortly after the attacks, NATO
17 took the unprecedented step of invoking article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which provides
18 that an "armed attack against one or more of [the parties] shall be considered an attack against
19 them all." North Atlantic Treaty, Apr. 4, 1949, art. 5, 63 Stat. 2241, 2244, 34 U.N.T.S. 243, 246.
20
21

22 20. (U) As a result of the unprecedented attacks of September 11, 2001, the United
23 States found itself immediately propelled into a worldwide war against a network of terrorist
24 groups, centered on and affiliated with al Qaeda, that possesses the evolving capability and
25 intention of inflicting further catastrophic attacks on the United States. That war is continuing
26 today, at home as well as abroad. Moreover, the war against al Qaeda and its allies is a very
27
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW, MDL No. 06-1791)

14

1 different kind of war, against a very different enemy, than any other war or enemy the Nation has
2 previously faced. Al Qaeda and its supporters operate not as a traditional nation-state but as a
3 diffuse, decentralized global network of individuals, cells, and loosely associated, often disparate
4 groups, that act sometimes in concert, sometimes independently, and sometimes in the United
5 States, but always in secret – and their mission is to destroy lives and to disrupt a way of life
6 through terrorist acts. Al Qaeda works in the shadows; secrecy is essential to al Qaeda's success
7 in plotting and executing its terrorist attacks.

9 ~~(TS//SI//NF~~ The Classified *In Camera, Ex Parte* Declaration of Dennis C. Blair,
10 Director of National Intelligence, details the particular facets of the continuing al Qaeda threat
11 and, thus, the exigent need for the NSA intelligence activities described here. The NSA
12 activities are directed at that threat, [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED] Global telecommunications networks, especially the Internet, have
17 developed in recent years into a loosely interconnected system – a network of networks – that is
18 ideally suited for the secret communications needs of loosely affiliated terrorist cells. Hundreds
19 of Internet service providers, or "ISPs," and other providers of communications services offer a
20 wide variety of global communications options, often free of charge. [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]⁶

25
26 ⁶~~(TS//SI//OC/NF~~ [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28

Classified *In Camera, Ex Parte* Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

15

22. (TS//SI//NF) [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED].

21 23. (TS//SI//NF) Our efforts against al Qaeda and its affiliates therefore present
22 critical challenges for the Nation's communications intelligence capabilities. First, in this new
23 kind of war, more than in any other we have ever faced, communications intelligence is essential
24 to our ability to identify the enemy and to detect and disrupt its plans for further attacks on the
25 United States. Communications intelligence often is the only means we have to learn the
26 identities of particular individuals who are involved in terrorist activities and the existence of
27
28

Classified In Camera. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

16

1 particular terrorist threats. Second, at the same time that communications intelligence is more
2 important than ever, the decentralized, non-hierarchical nature of the enemy and their
3 sophistication in exploiting the agility of modern telecommunications make successful
4 communications intelligence more difficult than ever. It is against this backdrop that the risks
5 presented by this litigation should be assessed, in particular the risks of disclosing particular
6 NSA sources and methods implicated by the claims.

7

8 C. (U) Summary of NSA Activities After 9/11 to Meet al Qaeda Threat

9 24. (U) After the September 11 attacks, the NSA received presidential authorization
10 and direction to detect and prevent further terrorist attacks within the United States by
11 intercepting the content⁷ of communications for which there were reasonable grounds to believe
12 that (1) such communications originated or terminated outside the United States and (2) a party
13 to such communication was a member or agent of al Qaeda or an affiliated terrorist organization.
14 The existence of this activity was disclosed by then-President Bush in December 2005 (and
15 subsequently referred to as the "Terrorist Surveillance Program" or "TSP").⁸

16 25. ~~FTS/TSP/SI/OC/NF~~ In more specific and classified terms, the NSA has
17 utilized a number of critically important intelligence sources and methods to meet the threat of
18 another mass casualty terrorist attack on the United States – methods that were designed to work
19

20

21

22 ⁷ (U) The term "content" is used in this Declaration to refer to the substance, meaning, or
23 purport of a communication, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2510(8).

24 ⁸ (U) On January 17, 2007, the Government made public the general facts that new
25 orders of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court had been issued that authorized the
26 Government to target for collection international communications into or out of the United States
27 where there is probable cause to believe that one of the communicants is a member or agent of al
28 Qaeda or an associated terrorist organization; that, as a result of these orders, any electronic
surveillance that had been occurring as part of the TSP was then being conducted subject to the
approval of the FISA Court; and that, under these circumstances, the TSP was not reauthorized.

1 in tandem and continue to this day under authority of the FISA. As noted above, one such
2 method involved the program publicly acknowledged by then-President Bush as the TSP, in
3 which the NSA intercepted the content of telephone and Internet communications pursuant to
4 presidential authorization.⁹ As described further below, under the TSP, NSA did not engage in
5 plaintiffs' alleged dragnet surveillance of communication content, but intercepted the content of
6 particular communications where reasonable grounds existed to believe one party involved a
7 member or agent of al Qaeda or affiliated terrorist organization based on particular "selectors"
8 (phone numbers or Internet addresses) associated with that target. In addition to collecting the
9 content of particular communications, the NSA has also collected *non-content* communication
10 information known as "meta data." Specifically, after the 9/11 attacks, the NSA collected bulk
11 meta data related to *telephony* communications for the purpose of conducting targeted analysis to
12 track al Qaeda-related networks. Telephony meta data is information derived from call detail
13 records that reflect non-content information such as, but not limited to, the date, time, and
14

15
16
17
18
19
20 ⁹ ~~(TS//TSP//SI ██████████ HOC/NFO)~~ The first presidential authorization of the TSP was
21 on October 4, 2001, and the TSP was reauthorized approximately every 30-60 days throughout
22 the existence of the program. The documents authorizing the TSP also contained the
23 authorizations for the meta data activities described herein. The authorizations, moreover,
24 evolved over time, and during certain periods authorized other activities (this Declaration is not
25 intended to and does not fully describe the authorizations and the differences in those
26 authorizations over time). ██████████

27 See *Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of LTG Keith B. Alexander ¶ 62,*
28 MDL No. 06-1791-VRW (N.D. Cal.) (submitted Apr. 20, 2007) (relating to all actions against
the MCI and Verizon Defendants). ██████████

Classified *In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency*
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

18

duration of telephone calls, as well as the phone numbers used to place and receive the calls.¹⁰ In addition, since the 9/11 attacks, the NSA has collected bulk meta data related to *Internet* communications. Internet meta data is header/router/addressing information, such as the "to," "from," "cc," and "bcc" lines, as opposed to the body or "re" lines, of a standard email.

26. ~~(F)S/H/SI//OC/NF~~ Each of the foregoing activities continues in some form under authority of the FISA and, thus, the NSA utilizes the same intelligence sources and methods today to detect and prevent further terrorist attacks that it did after the 9/11 attacks. First, as noted above, on January 10, 2007, the FISC issued two orders authorizing the Government to conduct certain electronic surveillance that had been occurring under the TSP. The FISC Orders were implemented on January 17, 2007, and, thereafter, any electronic surveillance that had been occurring as part of the TSP became subject to the approval of the FISC and the TSP was not reauthorized.¹¹

15

16

17 ¹⁰ ~~(F)S//TSP//SI//OC/NF~~ [REDACTED]

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

¹¹ ~~(F)S/H/SI//OC/NF~~ As also described further, see *infra* ¶¶ 63-66, the FISC extended these orders with some modifications. What is described below as the Foreign Telephone and Email Order expired in August 2007 and was supplanted by authority enacted by Congress – first under the Protect America Act and then the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 – to authorize

Cassidy *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
v. *et al.* United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

19

1 27. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ Second, with respect to the collection of telephony meta data,
2 since May 2006 certain telecommunication providers have been required by an order of the FISC
3 to produce to the NSA on a daily basis all telephony meta data that they create ("FISC Telephone
4 Business Records Order"). The FISC Telephone Business Records Order has been reauthorized
5 approximately every 90 days since it was first issued. Although this collection is broad in scope,
6 the NSA was authorized by the FISC to query the archived telephony data with identified
7 telephone numbers for which there are facts giving rise to a reasonable, articulable suspicion that
8 the number is associated with [REDACTED] (hereafter referred to
9 as a "RAS" determination).¹² Historically, only a tiny fraction of telephony meta data records
10 collected by the NSA has actually been presented to a trained professional for analysis. As
11 discussed further below, see *infra* ¶¶ 48-56, while the vast majority of records are thus never
12 viewed by a human at the NSA, it is still necessary to collect the meta data in bulk in order to
13
14

15 foreign intelligence surveillance of targets located overseas without individual court orders.

16
17 ¹² ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ As set forth further below, see *infra* ¶¶ 60-62, NSA's compliance
18 with this limitation in the FISC Order has been subject to further proceedings in the FISC that
19 commenced with a compliance report by the government on January 15, 2009, which indicated
20 that the NSA had also been querying incoming telephony meta data with selectors for
21 counterterrorism targets subject to NSA surveillance under Executive Order 12333, as to which
22 the NSA had not made a "RAS" determination. On March 2, 2009, the FISC renewed the Order
23 authorizing the bulk provision to NSA of business records containing telephony meta data from
24 telecommunications carriers, but subjected that activity to new limitations, including that the
25 NSA may query the meta data only after a motion is granted on a case-by-case basis (unless
26 otherwise necessary to protect against imminent threat to human life). The FISC also required
27 the Government to report to the FISC on its review of revisions to the meta data collection and
28 analysis process and to include affidavits describing the value of the collection of telephony meta
data authorized by the FISC Telephone Business Records Order. The Government submitted its
report to the FISC as required on August 17, 2009. The FISC subsequently renewed the
Telephone Business Records Order on September 3, 2009, and, in so doing, restored to NSA the
authority to make RAS determinations for selectors that NSA counterterrorism personnel
nominate for analysis through contact chaining [REDACTED] (these selectors are described
as "seeds"). This renewed Order expires on October 30, 2009.

utilize sophisticated and vital analytical tools for tracking the contacts [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] for protecting the national security of the United States.

3. ~~FPS//SI//OC/NP~~ Third, beginning in July 2004, the collection of Internet meta
4. data in bulk has been conducted pursuant to an order of the FISC authorizing the use of a pen
5. register and trap and trace device ("FISC Pen Register Order" or "PRTT Order"). See 18 U.S.C.
6. § 3127 (defining "pen register" and "trap and trace device"). Pursuant to the FISC Pen Register
7. Order, which has been reauthorized approximately every 90 days since it was first issued, the
8. NSA is authorized to collect, in bulk, meta data associated with electronic communications
9. [REDACTED] on the Internet.¹³ [REDACTED]

10. [REDACTED]
11. [REDACTED]
12. [REDACTED]
13. [REDACTED]
14. [REDACTED]
15. [REDACTED] Although the NSA collects email meta data in bulk [REDACTED]
16. [REDACTED] it has been authorized by the FISC to query the archived meta data only using email
17. addresses for which there are facts giving rise to a reasonable, articulable suspicion that the email
18. address is associated with [REDACTED]. As with bulk telephony
19. meta data collection, bulk Internet meta data collection is necessary to allow the NSA to use
20. critical and unique analytical capabilities to track the contacts (even retrospectively) [REDACTED]
21. [REDACTED] of known terrorists. Like telephony meta data activities, Internet meta
22. [REDACTED]

24. ¹³ ~~FPS//SI//OC/NP~~
25. [REDACTED]
26. [REDACTED]
27. [REDACTED]
28. [REDACTED]

Classified In Camera. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Verginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07 cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

21

1 data collection and analysis are vital tools for protecting the United States from attack, and,
2 accordingly, information pertaining to those activities is highly classified.¹⁴

3 **V. (U) Information Protected by Privilege**

4 29. (U) In general and unclassified terms, the following categories of information are
5 subject to the DNI's assertion of the state secrets privilege and statutory privilege under the
6 National Security Act, as well as my assertion of the NSA privilege:

- 7 A. (U) Information that may tend to confirm or deny whether
8 the plaintiffs have been subject to any alleged NSA
9 intelligence activity that may be at issue in this matter; and
10 B. (U) Any information concerning NSA intelligence
11 activities, sources, or methods that may relate to or be
12 necessary to adjudicate plaintiffs' allegations, including
13 allegations that the NSA, with the assistance of
14 telecommunications carriers, indiscriminately intercepts the
15 content of communications and also, to the extent
16 applicable to plaintiffs' claim, the communications records
17 of millions of Americans as part of an alleged "Program"
18 authorized by the President after 9/11. See, e.g., Amended
19 Compl. ¶¶ 1-8, 58.

20 (U) The scope of this assertion includes but is not limited
21 to:

22 (i) (U) Information concerning the scope and
23 operation of the now inoperative "Terrorist Surveillance
24 Program" ("TSP") regarding the interception of the content
25 of certain one-end international communications
26 reasonably believed to involve a member or agent of al-
27 Qaeda or an affiliated terrorist organization, and any other
28 information related to demonstrating that the NSA does not
otherwise engage in the content surveillance dragnet that
the plaintiffs allege; and

29 _____
30 ¹⁴ (TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF) As the NSA has previously advised the Court in related
31 proceedings, [REDACTED]

32 See Classified *In Camera*, *Ex Parte Declaration of LTG Keith B.*
33 Alexander ¶ 31 n.8, MDL No. 06-1791-VRW (N.D. Cal.) (submitted Apr. 20, 2007) (relating to
34 all actions against the MCI and Verizon Defendants).

(ii) (U) Any other information concerning NSA intelligence activities, sources, or methods that would be necessary to adjudicate the plaintiffs' claims, including, to the extent applicable, information that would tend to confirm or deny whether or not the NSA obtained from telecommunications companies communication transactional records; and

(iii) (U) Information that may tend to confirm or deny whether any telecommunications carrier has provided assistance to the NSA in connection with any alleged activity.

VI. (U) Description of Information Subject to Privilege and the Harm of Disclosure

A. (U) Information That May Tend to Confirm or Deny Whether the Plaintiffs Have Been Subject to Any Alleged NSA Activities

30. (U) The first major category of information as to which I am supporting the DNI's assertion of privilege, and asserting the NSA's own statutory privilege, concerns information as to whether particular individuals, including the named plaintiffs in this lawsuit, have been subject to alleged NSA intelligence activities. As set forth below, disclosure of such information would cause exceptionally grave harm to the national security.

18 31. ~~FTS/FFSP/SW/OC/NP~~ The named plaintiffs in this action – Virginia Shubert,
19 Noha Arafa, Sarah Dranoff, and Hilary Botein – allege that the contents of their telephone and
20 Internet communications were subject to “unlawful interception, search and seizure, and
21 electronic surveillance,” Amended Compl. ¶ 87, in connection with a program of “dragnet”
22 surveillance that captures the contents of “virtually every telephone, internet and/or email
23 communication that has been sent from or received within the United States since 2001,” *id.*
24 ¶¶ 1, 4. As set forth herein, the NSA does not engage in “dragnet” surveillance of the content of
25 communications as plaintiffs allege. [REDACTED]

Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

~~TOP SECRET//TSP//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR COMINT USE ONLY//NOFORN~~

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18

19 32. ~~(TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]

25
26 15 ~~(TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]

27 [REDACTED]
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

24

~~TOP SECRET//TSP//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR COMINT USE ONLY//NOFORN~~

1
2
3
4
5
6
7 33. ~~(TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]10 34. (U) As a matter of course, the NSA cannot publicly confirm or deny whether any
11 individual is subject to surveillance activities because to do so would tend to reveal actual
12 targets. For example, if the NSA were to confirm in this case and others that specific individuals
13 are not targets of surveillance, but later refuse to comment (as it would have to) in a case
14 involving an actual target, a person could easily deduce by comparing such responses that the
15 person in the latter case is a target. The harm of revealing targets of foreign intelligence
16 surveillance should be obvious. If an individual knows or suspects he is a target of U.S.
17
1819
20 ¹⁶ ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ I previously noted that NSA has estimated that it collects Internet
metadata associated with approximately [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]22 With respect to telephony meta data, I previously estimated that,
23 prior to the 2006 FISC Order, about [REDACTED] telephony meta data records was
24 presented to an analyst for review, see *Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of LTG Keith*
B. Alexander ¶ 27 (submitted May 25, 2007), and the scope of that disparity remains generally
25 the same.26 ¹⁷ ~~(TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

1 intelligence activities, he would naturally tend to alter his behavior to take new precautions
2 against surveillance. In addition, revealing who is not a target would indicate who has avoided
3 surveillance and what may be a secure channel for communication. Such information could lead
4 a person, secure in the knowledge that he is not under surveillance, to help a hostile foreign
5 adversary convey information; alternatively, such a person may be unwittingly utilized or even
6 forced to convey information through a secure channel. Revealing which channels are free from
7 surveillance and which are not would also reveal sensitive intelligence methods and thereby
8 could help any adversary evade detection and capitalize on limitations in NSA's capabilities.
9

10 35. ~~TS/SI~~ ~~VOCAM~~ [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED], the underlying meta data collection
12 could not be confirmed or denied without causing exceptionally grave damage to the national
13 security. In particular, disclosure of whether the NSA currently receives plaintiffs' telephony or
14 Internet meta data from any telecommunications companies would also violate specific
15 provisions of the FISC Telephone Records and FISC Pen Register Orders.
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified *In Camera*, *Ex Parte* Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

26

B. (U) Information Related to NSA Activities, Sources, or Methods Implicated by the Plaintiffs' Allegations and the Harm to National Security of Disclosure

1. (U) Plaintiffs' Allegations of a Communications Dragnet

36. (U) I am also supporting the DNI's assertion of privilege and asserting the NSA's
statutory privilege over any other facts concerning NSA intelligence activities, sources, or
methods that may relate to or be necessary to adjudicate the plaintiffs' claims and allegations,
including that (i) the NSA is indiscriminately intercepting the content of communications of
millions of ordinary Americans, *see, e.g.*, Amended Compl. ¶¶ 1-4, and (ii) to the extent relevant
to this action, that the NSA is collecting the "call data" of people in the United States with the
assistance of telecommunications carriers, presumably including information concerning the
plaintiffs' communications. *See, e.g., id.* ¶¶ 5-8, 58. As described above, the scope of the
government's privilege assertion includes but is not limited to: (1) facts concerning the operation
of the now inoperative Terrorist Surveillance Program and any other NSA activities needed to
demonstrate that the TSP was limited to the interception of the content of one-end foreign
communications reasonably believed to involve a member or agent of al Qaeda or an affiliated
terrorist organization and that the NSA does not otherwise conduct a dragnet of content
surveillance as the plaintiffs allege; and (2) information concerning whether or not the NSA
obtains transactional communications records from telecommunications companies. As set forth
below, the disclosure of such information would cause exceptionally grave harm to national
security.

¹³ FES/SI/OCAP

**Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)**

(a) (U) Information Related to the Terrorist Surveillance Program

1 37. (U) After the existence of the TSP was officially acknowledged in December
2 2005, the Government stated that the NSA's collection of the content of communications under
3 the TSP was directed at international communications in which a participant was reasonably
4 believed to be associated with al Qaeda or an affiliated organization. Plaintiffs' allegation that
5 the NSA has undertaken indiscriminate surveillance of the content of millions of
6 communications sent or received by people inside the United States after 9/11 under the TSP is
7 therefore false, again as the Government has previously stated.¹⁹ But to the extent the NSA must
8 demonstrate that content surveillance was so limited, and was not plaintiffs' alleged content
9 dragnet, or demonstrate that the NSA has not otherwise engaged in the alleged content dragnet,
10 highly classified NSA intelligence sources and methods about the operation of the TSP and NSA
11 intelligence activities would be subject to disclosure or the risk of disclosure. The disclosure of
12 whether and to what extent the NSA utilizes certain intelligence sources and methods would
13 reveal to foreign adversaries the NSA's capabilities, or lack thereof, enabling them to either
14 evade particular channels of communications that are being monitored, or exploit channels of
15 communications that are not subject to NSA activities – in either case risking exceptionally grave
16 harm to national security.

17 38. (U) The privileged information that must be protected from disclosure includes
18 the following classified details concerning content surveillance under the now inoperative TSP.

19 39. (TSP//TSP//SI//OCANE) First, interception of the content of communications
20 under the TSP was triggered by a range of information, including sensitive foreign intelligence,

21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28 ¹⁹ (U) See, e.g., Public Declaration of LTG Keith B. Alexander, Director, National
Security Agency ¶ 16 (submitted May 25, 2007).

1 obtained or derived from various sources indicating that a particular phone number or email
2 address is reasonably believed by the U.S. Intelligence Community to be associated with a
3 member or agent of al Qaeda or an affiliated terrorist organization. Professional intelligence
4 officers at the NSA undertook a careful but expeditious analysis of that information, and
5 considered a number of possible factors, in determining whether it would be appropriate to target
6 a telephone number or email address under the TSP. Those factors included whether the target
7 phone number or email address was: (1) reasonably believed by the U.S. Intelligence
8 Community, based on other authorized collection activities or other law enforcement or
9 intelligence sources, to be used by a member or agent of al Qaeda or an affiliated terrorist
10 organization; [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]

24 20 (TS//TSP//SI//OC/NF) [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

29

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 40. ~~(TS//~~TS//SI//OC/NP~~)~~ Once the NSA determined that there were reasonable
4 grounds to believe that the target is a member or agent of al Qaeda or an affiliated terrorist
5 organization, the NSA took steps to focus the interception on the specific al Qaeda-related target
6 and on communications of that target that were to or from a foreign country. In this respect, the
7 NSA's collection efforts were [REDACTED] that the NSA had
8 reasonable grounds to believe carry the "one-end" foreign communications of members or agents
9 of al Qaeda or affiliated terrorist organizations.
10 [REDACTED]
11 41. ~~(TS//~~TS//SI//OC/NP~~)~~ [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED] - [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]

20 42. ~~(TS//~~TS//SI//OC/NP~~)~~ [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

1
2
3 [REDACTED] 21

4 43. (TS//TSP//SI [REDACTED]//~~OC/NF~~) The NSA took specific steps in the actual TSP
5 interception process to minimize the risk that the communications of non-targets were
6 intercepted. With respect to telephone communications, specific telephone numbers identified
7 through the analysis outlined above were [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED] so that the only communications
9 intercepted were those to or from the targeted number of an individual who was reasonably
10 believed to be a member or agent of al Qaeda or an affiliated terrorist organization.

11 44. (TS//TSP//SI//~~OC/NF~~) For the interception of the content of Internet
12 communications under the TSP, the NSA used identifying information obtained through its
13 analysis of the target, such as email addresses [REDACTED], to target for collection the
14 communications of individuals reasonably believed to be members or agents of al Qaeda or an
15 [REDACTED]

16
17
18
19 21 (TS//TSP//SI [REDACTED]//~~OC/NF~~)
20 [REDACTED]
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

1 affiliated terrorist organization. [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED] The NSA did not search the content of the
5 communications [REDACTED] with "key words" other than the targeted selectors
6 themselves. Rather, the NSA targeted for collection only email addresses [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED] associated with suspected members or agents of al Qaeda or affiliated terrorist
8 organizations, or communications in which such [REDACTED] were mentioned. In
9 addition, due to technical limitations of the hardware and software, incidental collection of non-
10 target communications has occurred, and in such circumstances the NSA applies its
11 minimization procedures to ensure that communications of non-targets are not disseminated. To
12 the extent such facts would be necessary to dispel plaintiffs' erroneous content dragnet
13 allegations, they could not be disclosed without revealing highly sensitive intelligence methods.
14

15 45. ~~(TSP//AFSP//SI//OC/NF)~~ In addition to procedures designed to ensure that the TSP
16 was limited to the international communications of al Qaeda members and affiliates, the NSA
17 also took additional steps to ensure that the privacy rights of U.S. persons were protected. [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

32

1 [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]²²

3 46. (TS//TSP//OCAN) [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED] The foregoing information about the targeted scope of content

20 collection under the TSP could not be disclosed, in order to address and rebut plaintiffs'

21

22

²² (U//FOUO) In addition, in implementing the TSP, the NSA applied the existing Legal Compliance and Minimization Procedures applicable to U.S. persons to the extent not inconsistent with the presidential authorization. See United States Signals Intelligence Directive (USSID) 18. These procedures require that the NSA refrain from intentionally acquiring the communications of U.S. persons who are not the targets of its surveillance activities, that it destroy upon recognition any communications solely between or among persons in the United States that it inadvertently acquires, and that it refrain from identifying U.S. persons in its intelligence reports unless a senior NSA official determines that the recipient of the report requires such information in order to perform a lawful function assigned to it and the identity of the U.S. person is necessary to understand the foreign intelligence or to assess its significance.

1 allegation that the NSA engaged in the alleged content dragnet, without revealing specific NSA
2 sources and methods, which would cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security.

3 47. (FSS//TSP//SI//OC/N) In addition to these facts about the TSP, facts about other
4 NSA intelligence activities would be needed to address or prove that the NSA does not conduct
5 the alleged content dragnet. [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED] In short, there is no
12 other "dragnet" program authorized by the President after 9/11 under which the NSA intercepts
13 the content of virtually all domestic and international communications as the plaintiffs allege.
14 Again, however, information about NSA content surveillance activities beyond the TSP could
15 not be disclosed in order to address and rebut plaintiffs' allegation without revealing specific
16 NSA sources and methods and thereby causing exceptionally grave damage to national
17 security.²³
18
19

20
21
22 23 (FSS//TSP//SI//OC/N) To the extent relevant to this case, additional facts about the
23 operational details of the TSP and subsequent FISA authorized content surveillance activities
24 also could not be disclosed without exceptional harm to national security, including for example
25 information that would demonstrate the operational swiftness and effectiveness of utilizing
26 content surveillance in conjunction with the meta data activities. As noted, [REDACTED]

27 [REDACTED], the TSP, in conjunction with meta data
28 collection and analysis described herein, allowed the NSA to obtain rapidly not only the content
of a particular communication, but connections between that target and others who may form a
web of al Qaeda conspirators.

1 (b) (U) Other Classified Information Concerning NSA Activities

2 48. (F/S//TSP//SI//OC/NF) To the extent that the plaintiffs' "dragnet" allegations also
3 implicate other NSA activities, such as the bulk collection of *non-content* communication meta
4 data or the collection of communications records, *see, e.g.*, Amended Compl. ¶ 58, addressing
5 their assertions would require disclosure of NSA sources and methods that would cause
6 exceptionally grave harm to national security. As also explained herein, these collection
7 activities are now subject to the orders and supervision of the FISC.

8 49. (F/S//SI//OC/NF) As noted above, starting in October 2001, and since
9 2004 pursuant to the FISC Pen Register Order, the NSA collected bulk meta data associated with
10 electronic communications [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED] See *supra* ¶¶ 25, 28.²⁴ [REDACTED],
16

17 _____
18 ²⁴ (F/S//TSP//SI//OC/NF)
19 [REDACTED]
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

Classified *In Camera*, *Ex Parte* Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

35

1 [REDACTED] pursuant to the FISC Telephone Records Order, certain telecommunication companies
2 provide the NSA with bulk telephony meta data in the form of call detail records derived from
3 information kept by those companies in the ordinary course of business. *See supra ¶¶ 25, 27.*

4 50. (TS//SI//OC/NF) The bulk meta data collection activities that have been
5 undertaken by the NSA since 9/11 are vital tools for protecting the United States from another
6 catastrophic terrorist attack. Disclosure of these meta data activities, sources, or methods would
7 cause exceptionally grave harm to national security. It is not possible to target collection solely
8 on known terrorist telephone or Internet identifiers and effectively discover the existence,
9 location, and plans of terrorist adversaries. [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21
22 [REDACTED]
23
24
25
26
27
28

Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

36

1 [REDACTED]. The only effective means by which NSA analysts are able continuously
2 to keep track of such operatives is through meta data collection and analysis.

3 ~~(S//SI//NF)~~ Technical Details of Analytic Capabilities

4 51. ~~(T//SI//OC/NF)~~ In particular, the bulk collection of Internet and telephony meta
5 data allows the NSA to use critical and unique analytical capabilities to track the contacts [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 through the use of two highly sophisticated tools known as "contact-chaining" and [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED] Contact-chaining allows the NSA to identify telephone numbers and email addresses
10 that have been in contact with known [REDACTED] numbers and addresses; in turn, those
11 contacts can be targeted for immediate query and analysis as new [REDACTED] numbers
12 and addresses are identified. When the NSA performs a contact-chaining query on a terrorist-
13 associated telephone identifier, [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 52. ~~(T//SI//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 53. ~~(FS//SI//OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23

24 54. ~~(FS//SI//OC/NF)~~ Because it is impossible to determine in advance
25 which particular piece of meta data will turn out to identify a terrorist, collecting meta data in
26 bulk is vital for the success of contact-chaining [REDACTED]. NSA analysis know that the
27 terrorists' telephone calls are located somewhere in the billions of data bits: what they cannot
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

38

1 know ahead of time is exactly where. The ability to accumulate meta data substantially increases
2 NSA's ability to detect and identify these targets. One particular advantage of bulk meta data
3 collection is that it provides a historical perspective on past contact activity that cannot be
4 captured in the present or prospectively. Such historical links may be vital to identifying new
5 targets, because the meta data may contain links that are absolutely unique, pointing to potential
6 targets that otherwise would be missed. [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED] These sources and methods enable the NSA to segregate some of that very
12 small amount of otherwise undetectable but highly valuable information from the overwhelming
13 amount of other information that has no intelligence value whatsoever – in colloquial terms, to
14 find at least some of the needles hidden in the haystack. If employed on a sufficient volume of
15 raw data, contact chaining [REDACTED] can expose [REDACTED] and
16 contacts that were previously unknown. [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED]
22 55. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NR)~~ The foregoing discussion is not hypothetical. Since inception
23 of the first FISC Telephone Business Records Order, NSA has provided 277 reports to the FBI.
24 These reports have tipped a total of 2,900 telephone identifiers as being in contact with
25 identifiers associated with [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1
2
3
4
5 56. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ Accordingly, adjudication of plaintiffs' allegations concerning
6 the collection of non-content meta data and records about communication transactions would risk
7 or require disclosure of critical NSA sources and methods for [REDACTED] contacts of
8 terrorist communications as well as the existence of current NSA activities under FISC Orders.
9 Despite media speculation about these activities, official confirmation and disclosure of the
10 NSA's bulk collection and targeted analysis of telephony meta data would confirm to all of our
11 foreign adversaries [REDACTED] the existence of these critical intelligence
12 capabilities and thereby severely undermine NSA's ability to gather information concerning
13 terrorist connections and cause exceptionally grave harm to national security.²⁵

14
15 57. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ Information Concerning Current FISA Authorized
16 Activities and Specific FISC Orders

17
18 57. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ I am also supporting the DNI's state secrets privilege
19 assertion, and asserting NSA's statutory privilege, over information concerning the various

20
21
22 25 ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ In my prior classified declarations in this action, I set forth
23 specific examples of how the intelligence sources and methods utilized by the NSA after the 9/11
24 attacks, including content surveillance under the TSP and pursuant to subsequent FISA authority,
25 as well as non-content meta data collection and analysis, have led to the development by the
NSA of actionable intelligence and important counter-terrorism efforts. See, e.g., Classified *In
Camera, Ex Parte* Declaration of LTG Keith B. Alexander ¶¶ 35-43, 58-61 (submitted May 25,
2007). To the extent that such information would be relevant to any litigation in this action,
however, it could not be disclosed without revealing specific NSA intelligence information,
sources, and methods, thereby causing exceptionally grave harm to national security, and that
information remains subject to the government's privilege assertion.

1 orders of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court mentioned throughout this declaration that
2 authorize NSA intelligence collection activities, as well as NSA surveillance activities conducted
3 pursuant to the now lapsed Protect America Act ("PAA") and current activities authorized by the
4 FISA Amendments Act of 2008. As noted herein, the three NSA intelligence activities initiated
5 after the September 11 attacks to detect and prevent a further al Qaeda attack – (i) content
6 collection of targeted al Qaeda and associated terrorist-related communications under what later
7 was called the TSP; (ii) internet meta data bulk collection; and (iii) telephony meta data bulk
8 collection – have been subject to various orders of the FISC (as well as FISA statutory authority)
9 and are no longer being conducted under presidential authorization. The bulk collection of non-
10 content transactional data for Internet communications was first authorized by the FISC in the
11 July 2004 FISC Pen Register Order, and the bulk collection of non-content telephony meta data
12 was first authorized by the FISC in May 2006. The existence and operational details of these
13 orders, and of subsequent FISC orders reauthorizing these activities, remain highly classified and
14 disclosure of this information would cause exceptionally grave harm to national security.²⁶ In
15 addition, while the Government has acknowledged the general existence of the January 10, 2007
16 FISC Orders authorizing electronic surveillance similar to that undertaken in the TSP, the
17 content of those orders, and facts concerning the NSA sources and methods they authorize,
18
19
20
21
22

23 ²⁶ ~~FISC//SI//OC//NF~~ For this reason, the FISC Telephone Business Records Order and
24 FISC Pen Register Orders prohibit any person from disclosing to any other person that the NSA
25 has sought or obtained the telephony meta data, other than to (a) those persons to whom
26 disclosure is necessary to comply with the Order; (b) an attorney to obtain legal advice or
27 assistance with respect to the production of meta data in response to the Order; or (c) other
28 persons as permitted by the Director of the FBI or the Director's designee. The FISC Orders
further provide that any person to whom disclosure is made pursuant to (a), (b), or (c) shall be
subject to the nondisclosure requirements applicable to a person to whom the Order is directed in
the same manner as such person.

Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Sherbert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDI No. 06-1791)

41

1 cannot be disclosed without likewise causing exceptional harm to national security. Subsequent
2 content surveillance sources and methods utilized by the NSA under the PAA and, currently,
3 under the FISA Amendments Act of 2008 likewise cannot be disclosed. I summarize below the
4 proceedings that have occurred under authority of the FISA or the FISC.

5 58. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ (a) Internet Meta Data: Pursuant to the FISC Pen Register
6 Order, which has been reauthorized approximately every 90 days after it was first issued, NSA is
7 authorized to collect in bulk, from telecommunications carriers, meta data associated with
8 electronic communications [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] The NSA is authorized to query the archived meta
14 data collected pursuant to the FISC Pen Register Order using email addresses for which there
15 were facts giving rise to a reasonable, articulable suspicion that the email address was associated
16 with [REDACTED]. The FISC Pen Register Order was most
17 recently reauthorized on [REDACTED], 2009, and requires continued assistance by the providers
18 through [REDACTED] 2009.

19 59. ~~(TS//SI//OC/NF)~~ (b) Telephony Meta Data: Beginning in May 2006, the NSA's
20 bulk collection of telephony meta data, previously subject to presidential authorization, was
21 authorized by the FISC Telephone Business Records Order. Like the FISC Pen Register Order,
22 the FISC Telephone Business Records Order was reauthorized approximately every 90 days.
23 Based on the finding that reasonable grounds existed that the production was relevant to efforts
24 to protect against international terrorism, the Order required telecommunications carriers to
25 produce to the NSA "call detail records" or "telephony metadata" pursuant to 50 U.S.C.
26
27

28 Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-695-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

42

1 § 1861(c) (authorizing the production of business records for, *inter alia*, an investigation to
2 protect against international terrorism). Telephony meta data was compiled from call detail data
3 maintained by the providers in the ordinary course of business that reflected non-content
4 information such as the date, time, and duration of telephone calls, as well as the phone numbers
5 used to place and receive the calls. The NSA was authorized by the FISC to query the archived
6 telephony meta data solely with identified telephone numbers for which there were facts giving
7 rise to a reasonable, articulable suspicion that the number was associated with [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED] (that is, a "RAS" determination). The FISC Telephone Business
9 Records Order was most recently reauthorized on September 3, 2009, with authority continuing
10 until October 30, 2009.
11

12 60. ~~FFSHSI//OC/NF~~ As noted above, *see supra* note 12, on January 15, 2009, the
13 Department of Justice ("DOJ") submitted a compliance incident report related to the Business
14 Records Order to the FISC, based on information provided to DOJ by the NSA, which indicated
15 that the NSA's prior reports to the FISC concerning implementation of the FISC Telephone
16 Business Records Order had not accurately reported the extent to which NSA had been querying
17 the telephony meta data acquired from carriers. In sum, this compliance incident related to a
18 process whereby currently tasked telephony selectors (*i.e.*, phone numbers) reasonably believed
19 to be associated with authorized counter terrorism foreign intelligence targets under Executive
20 Order 12333 were reviewed against the incoming telephony metadata to determine if that
21 number had been in contact with a number in the United States. This process occurred prior to a
22 formal determination by NSA that reasonable, articulable suspicion existed that the selector was
23 associated with [REDACTED] and was not consistent with
24 NSA's prior descriptions of the process for querying telephony meta data.
25
26

27 Classified *In Camera*. *Ex Parte* Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
28 *Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al.* (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

43

~~TOP SECRET TSP COMINT~~ ██████████ ORCON NOFORN

1 61. ~~FPS#SHOGAN~~ By Order dated March 2, 2009, the FISC directed that the NSA
2 may continue to acquire call detail records of telephony meta data in accordance with the FISC
3 Telephone Business Record Orders, but was prohibited from accessing data acquired except in a
4 limited manner. In particular, the Government could request through a motion that the FISC
5 authorize querying of the telephony meta data for purposes of obtaining foreign intelligence on a
6 case-by-case basis (unless otherwise necessary to protect against imminent threat to human life,
7 subject to report to the FISC the next business day). In addition, following the Government's
8 disclosures concerning compliance with the FISC Orders, the FISC imposed other obligations,
9 including to report on its ongoing review of the matter and to file affidavits describing the
10 continuing value of the telephony meta data collection to the national security of the United
11 States and to certify that the information sought is relevant to an authorized investigation. The
12 Government completed its end-to-end review and submitted its report and the required affidavits
13 to the FISC on August 3, 2009. In that report, the Government outlined the steps NSA had taken
14 to address and correct the instances of noncompliance with FISC Orders, as well as the remedial
15 safeguards put in place to monitor and ensure compliance with such Orders in the future. The
16 FISC most recently renewed the Telephone Business Records Order on September 3, 2009. This
17 latest renewal restored to NSA the authority to make RAS determinations on telephone
18 identifiers nominated by NSA personnel to use in conducting contact chaining ██████████
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

62. ~~FPS/TSP/SI~~ ██████████ #OCANIA NSA is committed to working with the FISC
on this and other compliance issues to ensure that this vital intelligence tool works appropriately
and effectively. For purposes of this litigation, and the privilege assertions now made by the
DNI and by the NSA, the intelligence sources and methods described herein remain highly

*Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Siubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)*

44

~~TOP SECRET TSP COMINT~~ ██████████ ORCON NOFORN

1 classified and the disclosure that [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED] would compromise vital NSA
3 sources and methods and result in exceptionally grave harm to national security.

4 63. ~~(TS//TSP//SI//OC/NP)~~ (c) Content Collection: On January 10, 2007, the FISC
5 issued orders authorizing the Government to conduct certain electronic surveillance that had
6 been occurring under the TSP. Those Orders included [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]

12 the "Foreign Telephone and Email Order," which [REDACTED]
13 authorized, *inter alia*, electronic surveillance of telephone and Internet communications [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED] where the Government determined that there was probable
15 cause to believe that (1) one of the communicants is a member or agent of [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED] and (2) the communication is to or from a foreign country (*i.e.*,
17 a one-end foreign communication to or from the United States). Thereafter, any electronic
18 surveillance that was occurring as part of the TSP became subject to the approval of the FISA
19 Court and the TSP was not reauthorized.²⁷
20

21
22 _____
23 ²⁷ ~~(TS//SI//OC/NP)~~ [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

1 64. ~~FSI//SI//OC/NF~~ The Foreign Telephone and Email Order remained in effect
2 until the Protect America Act ("PAA") was enacted in August 2007. Under the PAA, the FISA's
3 definition of "electronic surveillance" was clarified to exclude "surveillance directed at a person
4 reasonably believed to be located outside the United States." 50 U.S.C. § 1805A. The PAA
5 authorized the DNI and the Attorney General to jointly "authorize the acquisition of
6 foreign intelligence information concerning persons reasonably believed to be outside the
7 United States" for up to one year, *id.* § 1805B(a), and to issue directives to communications
8 service providers requiring them to "immediately provide the Government with all information,
9 facilities, and assistance necessary to accomplish the acquisition" of necessary intelligence
10 information, *id.* § 1805B(e). Such directives were issued to telecommunications companies and
11 the NSA conducted content surveillance of overseas targets under the PAA through their
12 facilities.
13

14 65. ~~FSI//SI//OC/NF~~ Beginning in September 2008, expiring directives that had been
15 issued under the PAA for content surveillance of overseas targets (including surveillance of
16 specific [REDACTED] targets overseas) were replaced by new directives for such surveillance
17 issued pursuant to the FISA Amendments Act of 2008. Title I of the FISA Amendments Act of
18 2008 authorizes the targeting of persons outside of the United States without individual FISC
19 orders but subject to directives issued to carriers by the Director of National Intelligence and the
20 Attorney General under Section 702(h) of the FISA for the continuation of overseas surveillance
21
22

23
24
25
26
27 [REDACTED]

28

Classified *In Camera*, *Ex Parte* Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

46

1 under this new authority. See 50 U.S.C. § 1881a(h) (as added by the FISA Act of 2008, P.L.
2 110-261).

3 66. ~~(F)S//TSP//SI//O&NF~~ In sum, the post 9/11 content surveillance activities
4 undertaken by the NSA evolved from the presidentially authorized TSP to the FISC Foreign
5 Telephone and Email Order, to the directives issued under the PAA and, ultimately, to the
6 directives that are now being issued pursuant to the FISA Amendments Act of 2008. Each
7 authorization sought to enable the NSA to undertake surveillance on numerous multiple targets
8 overseas without the need to obtain advance court approval for each target, but none has entailed
9 the kind of indiscriminate content surveillance dragnet on telephone and Internet
10 communications that the plaintiffs allege.

11 3. **(U) Plaintiffs' Allegations that Telecommunications Companies have Assisted
12 the NSA with the Alleged Activities**

13 67. (U) The third major category of NSA intelligence sources and methods as to
14 which I am supporting the DNI's assertion of privilege, and asserting the NSA's statutory
15 privilege, concerns information that may tend to confirm or deny whether or not
16 telecommunications providers have assisted the NSA with alleged intelligence activities.
17 Plaintiffs allege that they are customers of telecommunications carriers such as AT&T and
18 Verizon, and that these companies participated in the alleged surveillance activities that the
19 plaintiffs seek to challenge. As set forth below, confirmation or denial of a relationship between
20 the NSA and any telecommunications carriers on alleged intelligence activities would cause
21 exceptionally grave harm to national security.

22 68. ~~(F)S//TSP//SI//O&NF~~ Because the NSA is not engaged in the
23 indiscriminate dragnet of the content of domestic and international communications as the
24

25 Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
26 Virginia Shubert et al v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

27 47

1 plaintiffs allege, no telecommunications carriers have assisted the NSA with any such activity.²⁸

2 [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 69. ~~(TS//FSP//SI [REDACTED] //OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED]

21

22 ²⁸ ~~(TS//FSP//SI [REDACTED] //OC/NF)~~ On September 19, 2008, then-Attorney General
23 Mukasey submitted a classified declaration and certification to this Court authorized by Section
24 802 of the FISA Act Amendments Act of 2008, see 50 U.S.C. § 1885a, [REDACTED]

25

26

27

28

Classified *In Camera*, *Ex Parte* Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

48

TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT [REDACTED]

//ORCON/NOFORN

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 70. (TS//SI//SI [REDACTED] //OC/NF) [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20
21
22 29 (TS//SI//OC/NF) [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

49

TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT [REDACTED]

//ORCON/NOFORN

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 71. (FS//SI//OCAN) [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19
20 30 (FS//SI//OCAN) [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 31 (FS//SI//OCAN) [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

50

~~TOP SECRET//TSP//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~ORCON/NOFORN~~

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 72. ~~(TS//SI [REDACTED] #OC/NF)~~ [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

51

~~TOP SECRET//TSP//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~ORCON/NOFORN~~

TOP SECRET//TSP//COMINT [REDACTED]

ORCON//NOFORN

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 73. (TS//SI [REDACTED]//OC/NF) [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

52

TOP SECRET//TSP//COMINT [REDACTED] ORCON//NOFORN

TOP SECRET//ISP//COMINT [REDACTED] FORCON//NOFORN

74. (TS//SI [REDACTED]//OC/NF) [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]

75. (TS//SI [REDACTED]//OC/NF) [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED] - [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

53

TOP SECRET//ISP//COMINT [REDACTED] FORCON//NOFORN

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR CON/NOPORN~~

1 [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED]
3 [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 76. ~~(TS//SI//NOFORN)~~ [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED]
25
26
27 32 ~~(TS//SI//NOFORN)~~ [REDACTED]
28 [REDACTED]

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt Gen Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Slubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

54

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR CON/NOPORN~~

1
2
3 **VII. (U) Risks of Allowing Litigation to Proceed**

4 77. ~~FSI//SI~~ ~~#OCANF~~ Upon examination of the allegations, claims,
5 facts, and issues raised by this case, it is my judgment that sensitive state secrets are so central to
6 the subject matter of the litigation that any attempt to proceed will substantially risk the

7 disclosure of the privileged state secrets described above. Although plaintiffs' alleged content
8 surveillance dragnet does not occur, proving why that is so, [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED] would directly implicate highly classified
10 intelligence information and activities. Similarly, to the extent the plaintiffs' "dragnet"
11 allegation implicates the bulk collection of non-content information and records containing
12 transactional meta data about communications, addressing the plaintiffs' claims would also
13 compromise currently operative NSA sources and methods that are essential to protecting
14 national security, including for detecting and preventing a terrorist attack. [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]
19 [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED] In my judgment, any effort to probe the outer-bounds of such
22 classified information would pose inherent and significant risks of the disclosure of that
23 [REDACTED]

24 33 ~~FSI//SI~~ ~~#OCANF~~ [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]
26 [REDACTED]
27 See Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Deborah A.
28 Bonanni, National Security Agency ¶¶ 78-79, *Jewel v. NSA*, 08-cv-4373-VRW (submitted Apr.
3, 2009).

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

55

1 information, including critically sensitive information about NSA sources, methods, operations,
2 targets, [REDACTED]. Indeed, any effort merely to allude to those facts in a non-classified
3 fashion could be revealing of classified details that should not be disclosed. Even seemingly
4 minor or innocuous facts, in the context of this case or other non-classified information, can tend
5 to reveal, particularly to sophisticated foreign adversaries, a much bigger picture of U.S.
6 intelligence gathering sources and methods.

7
8. ~~(TS//SI//NF)~~ The United States has an overwhelming interest in detecting and
9 thwarting further mass casualty attacks by al Qaeda. The United States has already suffered one
10 attack that killed thousands, disrupted the Nation's financial center for days, and successfully
11 struck at the command and control center for the Nation's military. Al Qaeda continues to
12 possess the ability and clear, stated intent to carry out a massive attack in the United States that
13 could result in a significant loss of life, as well as have a devastating impact on the U.S.
14 economy. According to the most recent intelligence analysis, attacking the U.S. Homeland
15 remains one of al Qaeda's top operational priorities, see *Classified In Camera Ex Parte*
16 Declaration of Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Director of National Intelligence, and al Qaeda will
17 keep trying for high-impact attacks as long as its central command structure is functioning and
18 affiliated groups are capable of furthering its interests.

19
20. ~~(TS//SI//NF)~~ Al Qaeda seeks to use our own communications infrastructure
21 against us as they secretly attempt to infiltrate agents into the United States, waiting to attack at a
22 time of their choosing. One of the greatest challenges the United States confronts in the ongoing
23 effort to prevent another catastrophic terrorist attack against the Homeland is the critical need to
24 gather intelligence quickly and effectively. Time is of the essence in preventing terrorist attacks,
25 and the government faces significant obstacles in finding and tracking agents of al Qaeda as they
26

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR CONNOFORM~~

1 manipulate modern technology in an attempt to communicate while remaining undetected. The
2 NSA sources, methods, and activities described herein are vital tools in this effort.

3 **VIII. (U) Conclusion**

4 80. (U) In sum, I support the DNI's assertion of the state secrets privilege and
5 statutory privilege to prevent the disclosure of the information described herein and detailed
6 herein. I also assert a statutory privilege under Section 6 of the National Security Agency Act
7 with respect to the information described herein that concerns the functions of the NSA. Public
8 disclosure of the aforementioned intelligence sources, methods and activities could reasonably be
9 expected to cause exceptionally grave harm to the national security of the United States.
10 Consequently, because proceedings in this case risk disclosure of privileged and classified
11 intelligence-related information, I respectfully request that the Court not only protect that
12 information from disclosure but also dismiss this case to prevent exceptionally grave harm to the
13 national security of the United States.
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

Classified *In Camera*, Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

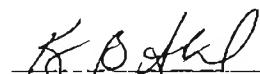
57

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FOR CONNOFORM~~

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FORCON/NOFORN~~

1 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

2 DATE: 30 Oct 09


3 KETH B. ALEXANDER
4 LTG, USA
5 Director
6 National Security Agency

7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

Classified *In Camera*. Ex Parte Declaration of Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, Director, National Security Agency
Virginia Shubert, et al. v. United States of America, et al. (No. 07-cv-693-VRW; MDL No. 06-1791)

58

~~TOP SECRET//SI//COMINT~~ [REDACTED] ~~FORCON/NOFORN~~